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**Great Seneca Science Corridor Minor Master Plan Amendment
PUBLIC HEARING – Montgomery County Council
October 19, 2021**

The Gaithersburg-Germantown Chamber of Commerce supports the key recommendations outlined in the **Great Seneca Science Corridor Minor Master Plan Amendment**.

The staging requirements in the original 2010 master plan have been an impediment for development. The inclusion of full funding of the Corridor Cities Transitway (CCT) as a Stage II requirement has proved to be unworkable. While the Chamber fully supports the CCT, and have been a primary advocate for the project, it should not be specifically identified as a staging requirement. Montgomery County does not have control over when – or if – the CCT will be built. Which leaves very little control over whether the master plan will ever come to fruition. We appreciate the Planning Board’s willingness to review the master plan to come up with a strategy for the area to realize its full potential.

While we had hoped that the minor master plan revision would have eliminated the CCT as a requirement, we agree with the first recommendation to release 400,000 square feet of non-residential development capacity. This is a reasonable interim step given that the second recommendation is to have a comprehensive amendment to the 2010 Plan.

As we expressed at the Public Hearing with the Planning Board in June, once this current recommendation is approved, we ask that the comprehensive review be scheduled as quickly as possible. As we have in the past, the Gaithersburg-Germantown Chamber is eager to participate in the comprehensive review of the GSSC Master Plan.

Recommendation 1 - Create an interim stage, between Stage 1 and Stage 2, that shifts 400,000 square feet of nonresidential development from Stage 2 to this interim stage. Release 400,000 square feet of non-residential development capacity immediately through this interim stage.

Recommendation - 2 Initiate a comprehensive amendment to the 2010 Plan to address the departures and barriers from the 2010 Plan vision identified through this Amendment, as well as the staging requirements. The comprehensive amendment provides an opportunity to integrate policy guidance from countywide plans and initiatives including Corridor Forward: The I-270 Transit Plan, Thrive Montgomery 2050, and Vision Zero, as well as to employ a robust outreach and engagement strategy to create a plan that advances racial equity and social justice.

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